

# Coalition Loads Biblical Weapons During Defense of Marriage Summit

A Washington, D.C., bishop took the battle for **traditional marriage** to the heavenlies on Wednesday.

Led by Bishop Harry Jackson, the High Impact Leadership Coalition (HILC) blew the trumpet at the initial Defense of Marriage Summit at Church on the Living Edge in Longwood, Fla., near Orlando.

The group's mission is to mount an effective, multi-denominational, multi-racial offensive to defend the institution of marriage between a man a woman, which has come under intense attack in recent months from the liberal left and the LGBT community. The coalition is comprised of religious, legal, political and citizen advocates of the Defense of Marriage Act.

In addition to Jackson, speakers at the event included former Lt. Gen. Jerry Boykin, an original member of the U.S. Army's Delta Force who is now an ordained minister; John Stemberger, president and general counsel for the Florida Family Policy Council; pro-life activist and author Dr. Alveda King; and Bishop Mark Chironna, senior pastor at Church on the Living Edge.

The HILC plans to organize and execute six more regional Defense of Marriage Summits in the coming weeks and will support other marriage protection action coalition efforts in targeted states leading up to the general election in November.

The Defense of Marriage Act, or DOMA, enacted in September 1996, is a United States federal law that defines marriage as

the legal union of one man and one woman. **Same-sex marriage** is legal in six states in the U.S., and President **Barack Obama** announced his support for same-sex marriage in early May.

“The way our government is supposed to work is that once a law is put into effect, then our administration is not supposed to say, ‘I’m not going to enforce DOMA,’” said Jackson, senior pastor of Hope Christian Church in Washington, D.C. “And so, we want to send people to Washington in November who are willing to say that we won’t let the president or anyone else say that they are not going to follow through with a law like DOMA.

“That’s what this coalition and this movement is all about. I’m a preacher, and I believe it’s the moral issues that unify blacks, whites, Asians and Hispanics. It brings us together under what I’d like to frame as a new moral and biblical rainbow coalition. We need to steal the rainbow back and say we’re going to stand together for this crucial moral issue.”

Other goals of the HILC include:

- Working with congress to compel Obama and the Department of Justice to enforce violations of DOMA.
- Working with both Democrats and Republicans to incorporate DOMA language into their respective party platforms during the 2012 conventions.
- Working to change the public narrative and language surrounding gay marriage.

The coalition will visit swing states in hopes of gathering support for political candidates who stand for traditional marriage and family values.

Stemberger, who was instrumental in getting Florida Amendment 2—which defines marriage as a union only between one man and one woman—in 2008, said that the biggest impact of traditional marriage and family values falls on children.

"Kids need a mom and a dad," Stemberger said. "Men and women bring very different things to the table. What we're shooting for is the standard, and God has designed men and women to be a part of marriage."

"Same-sex marriage really subjects children to a vast, untested social experiment. Whenever you tamper with the exit rules or the entrance rules to the institution as fundamental as marriage, you're always going to have profound sociological consequences."

Boykin, who spent more than 36 years in the U.S. Army, said the 2011 repeal of the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" law that banned openly gay men, lesbians and bisexuals from military service, already is producing change.

"There are already two reported cases of same-sex marriage in the military, and that will have an impact not only on the men and women serving, but it will have an impact on their families, too," Boykin said.

"It is also impacting the chaplains in the military who are facing discrimination because they say they cannot counsel a soldier, sailor or marine that comes in and talks to them about their homosexuality. It is going to hurt our military and our readiness at a time when our enemies are growing stronger."